

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A fuel cell system made up of a plurality of fuel cells. Each cell includes a fuel inlet, an oxidant inlet, a fuel side product outlet and an oxidant side product outlet. A common fuel supply line is provided for the fuel inlets. A common oxidant supply line is provided for the oxidant inlets. A common product purging mechanism is coupled to the outlets for purging the same of unused fuel, unused oxidant, fuel side product and oxidant side product. The product purging mechanism includes valving structure operable to selectively and independently open the outlets of a given cell. A method for operating such a fuel cell system includes supplying fuel to the fuel inlets from a common source of fuel and supplying an oxidant to the oxidant inlets from a common source of oxidant. The outlets of a given cell are selectively opened to purge fuel product and oxidant product from the given cell while the outlets of other cells are kept closed.